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1-1-1884

## Memoirs of Harriett F Switzer - 03 January, 1884

Harriet F. Switzer

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### Recommended Citation

Switzer, Harriet F., "Memoirs of Harriett F Switzer - 03 January, 1884" (1884). *Texts of Central Florida*. 745.  
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Feb. 1884 -

My Dear Family - Some nice new experiences, but I have had some nice new experiences, but several of them I do not wish to repeat. We have been hemoaning the rather humming down appearance of our "rig," & the necessary expense entailed if we have it painted & relined. In a thoughtless & reckless moment I said "Hub, if you will paint the body I will reline the top & sides." "Done" said the inconsiderate fellow & to Orlando we went for supplies. I bought some good bottle green material & set to work & oh! what a dreadful piece of work it was! However, outside of wear & tear on temper & nerves the whole transaction will not have cost us more than four dollars. As to my vanity, it has had a tremendous boost - because Russell told me that my part could not have looked better if it had come from the shop. I fear he drew a long bow, but the remark was satisfactory. I don't know how long it will be before my fingers get over the soreness, but the result of our efforts & the satisfaction of accomplishing a hard task, will compensate for all the trouble. You know we have been building the little homestead house; it is now finished, two rooms with porch back & front & a lean to. I have plans for "furnishing" with boxes, barrel chairs etc. We could not take every thing out at once so sent what was absolutely necessary, which included a cot & hammock for one of my dearest dreams for a long time has been to sleep in a hammock! Russell said "you'll be death fired by warming" but I thought I knew better. The are out here with 6 or 8



men, Henry Daniels to do the cooking & he is a  
fine Cook. On our way here, when we came  
to the Wekiva Creek which we have to cross,  
we found it much swollen & I was troubled  
about crossing, but my orders were to "take  
the basket on your lap, well put our feet  
up on the dash board & win through without  
getting wet." So our feet went up & my  
skirts also. If Russell had not been such  
a good driver I would not have consented  
to try it. Blacklock & I were of the same  
opinion as to not liking it very much,  
especially when the water got higher and  
higher & at last came into the buggy, but  
that didn't last long & we soon pulled out &  
onto the road without any damage done.  
We found our workers on the ground & Henry  
beginning operations for the evening meal. Our  
cot was soon made up & the hammock swung  
in the sitting room. Then we went on the  
porch to watch the men. It was a picturesque  
scene. They had built a large fire & were  
squatting round it singing & joking with  
each other. While Henry with a very  
intent face manipulated the "waster" upon  
in which he was doing all sorts of things  
& soon brought us a fine supper. Then  
we retired to rest (?) Russ under a mosquito  
bar, I in my hammock & for a new experience,  
& I got it. I had a piece of netting over  
the hammock but it did not go to the floor.  
Not being thin my flesh protruded between  
each space in my bed & made most beautiful  
& comfortable spots for all the mosquitoes in  
the vicinity. After twisting, turning & trying  
every dodge to get away from the pests, and



dragging my quill in a hamper is no fun -  
I at last gave up in despair. ~~to~~ my cheek-  
I wrapped myself, head & all, in it & lay  
on the floor, for there only one side could  
be attacked, at a time, & I said emphatically,  
"never again! one experience is enough!"  
Very early I arose & went out side. - The  
dawn with all its exquisite colors was  
dawning in the East & a faint haze gave  
an air of mystery to the surroundings. - In  
the distance I caught the glint of water  
between the trees & they - to my delight.  
Coming up the little hill from the kitchen  
lawn (- was a dove & lawn, such dainty  
lovely creatures. Their curiosity drew  
them almost to the house, when some-  
thing startled them & with graceful leaps  
& bounds they were soon out of sight.  
I love it out here among the pines, there  
is such a health giving air & it is a  
regular holiday for me, (not any work  
to speak of & three good meals a day  
cooked for me. - I wish you could all  
have the early dawns, the brilliant moon-  
light nights, or - what is almost as beautiful  
the star studded sky, the pine laden air &  
listen to the wit & happiness of the workers.  
Their merriment is very contagious. We expect  
to be here for some time, making trips to Bonita  
Buen for supplies & the mail. One of the  
men is off for Hinch Park now, &  
we have dear ones, with love  
Your rusticating relative  
Nattie.